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McDonnell-Russell

McCone Vows to Keep Policy Views to Himself

However, He Declines to Discuss CIA Methods in Letter to Sen. Russell

WASHINGTON (UPI) — John A. McCone gave Congress new assurances Sunday that he does not plan to volunteer views on national policy in his post as director of central intelligence.

He politely declined, however, to discuss methods used by the Central Intelligence Agency in its super-secret work. He also took issue with complaints that the agency has no supervision.

McCone's views were contained in a letter to Sen. Russell (D-Ga.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The committee is expected to act favorably on McCone's nomination today.

Answers Questions

His letter included replies to questions raised by Sen. McCarthy (D-Minn.) at the committee's hearing on his appointment. In addition to the letter, McCone gave the committee a list of his financial holdings which, in keeping with the committee's policy, was not made public.

McCone's 1,600-word letter was, for the most part, a restatement of his testimony before the committee last Thursday. In that testimony, he said he does not view his job as a policy-making position.

After the hearing of the

vasion of Cuba, the CIA was accused of making U.S. policy instead of only providing information. With regard to this, McCone said:

"I might be asked my personal views, and if so I would feel free to give them but do not conceive that it is proper for the director of Central Intelligence to volunteer in regard to questions concerning the national policy."

Mum on Methods

McCone said he could not respond to McCarthy's question as to "methods which can be justifiably used" by the CIA because of the responsibility imposed by law to protect intelligence sources and methods. The National Security Act of 1947 makes the director of CIA responsible "for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure."

As to the authority for some of CIA's activities in the past, McCone suggested that CIA is not responsible for events just because they have been attributed to CIA. He added, however, that the President has "wide powers" under the Constitution to protect and promote the national interest.

"At the present time, in my opinion, the national interest is best served by taking steps to deter the encroachment of communism," said McCone.